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ON PAGE A-1

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Colleges now are more willing to do CIA research

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Professors from Villanova University and Rutgers University have carried out research for the CIA in the last few years.

Pennsylvania State University is doing CIA research now — although university officials won't say exactly what it is.

And more than a dozen other area colleges and universities contacted recently say they would willingly accept CIA-funded research today if it was unclassified and if it fit into the institutions' guidelines for scholarly, approved academic research.

Even officials at Ivy League universities, including the University of Pennsylvania and Princeton, say they would accept research for the CIA if it was both scholarly and open, although neither is doing CIA research now.

The CIA, in short, has become more welcome on campus today than at any time in the last 20 years. Even Harvard has one CIA contract: a \$7,500 yearly grant that gives the CIA subscriptions to a series of publications about computer technology and information management.

"I think the CIA has been trying to find an academic home all over the place, and the trend has certainly been toward further involvement" in higher education, said John Shattuck, vice president for governmental and public affairs at Harvard.

The CIA itself says it is busily trying to re-establish the ties to academia that were broken during the 1960s, when many universities revealed that they had been secretly receiving CIA funding and re-

sponded to student pressure by withdrawing from the research.

"We have been very active in this area, partially because Congress has actually mandated that we seek out new sources of information, third and fourth opinions, to avoid the problem of 'staleness' of ideas that sometimes arises," said Patti Volz, a spokeswoman for the CIA.

And Robert Gates, deputy director of intelligence for the CIA, said in an interview that the agency's isolation from academic research had led to some serious intelligence problems, such as the mistaken view that the shah of Iran was leading a stable government.

"There were scholars out there saying the shah was in trouble, and somehow that assessment never got incorporated into any official assessment," said Gates.

Now, Gates said, many campus scholars see a need to assist the government in their areas of specialty, and the CIA is more willing to listen to them.

"Can you imagine what people would say if we contended that no one in the academic world has anything to offer us, that there is no information or perspective that could help us do our job? It's inconceivable that anyone would make that point," Gates said.

During much of that time that the CIA was out of favor on campus, the mere mention of a CIA research contract in some student newspapers generated demonstrations.

And even now, CIA-funded research remains a ticklish question on some campuses. Volz said the CIA

would not disclose the names of individuals or universities doing research or consultant work for the agency.

Harvard recently wrestled for months with a prickly CIA-related controversy that arose when the director of the university's Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Nadav Safran, accepted \$45,700 from the agency to support a university conference on Islamic fundamentalism.

Safran also accepted a CIA grant of \$107,430 to underwrite his recently published book, *Saudi Arabia: The Ceaseless Quest for Security*. The grant allowed the CIA review and censorship rights over the manuscript.

When word leaked out about the secret CIA funding, Safran announced his resignation as director of the center, effective in June, although he will remain a tenured professor of government at the university.

More recently, Harvard began an investigation into the work of another well-known professor, Samuel Huntington, director of the Center for International Affairs.

Huntington has acknowledged that he started work in 1984 on a CIA-sponsored study of the political stability of dictatorships without notifying university officials.

He said the contract was for "slightly more than \$10,000" and that it gave the CIA the right to pre-publication review of materials resulting from the study, as well as the right to prevent the disclosure of the funding source in print.

Harvard prohibits professors from accepting grants that allow outside sponsors to review and edit research before it is published or that restrict professors from acknowledging financial support in print.

The University of Pennsylvania has similar rules prohibiting any research that isn't open and fully publishable.

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Thomas Naff, director of Penn's Middle East Research Institute, said the institute has no CIA contracts, but added: "We wouldn't necessarily reject CIA research funding. It depends on what the terms are, and right away it must be said that we abide by the university's policy on research."

Naff, just as many scholars, said he believes that the CIA is as entitled as any other government or nongovernment agency to research or information from experts in higher education.

"As long as there are no CIA restrictions that conflict with open research, then it seems to me that one can't say that CIA money is automatically 'tainted money,'" Naff said.

Robert May, a Princeton professor and chairman of the Princeton University Research Board, said CIA-funded research would be welcomed "if it were open and basically scholarly in nature — for example, a look at the rise of Islam — and it fit into someone's academic research area."

He said Princeton is not carrying out any CIA research now.

In the Philadelphia area, Justin Green, professor of political science at Villanova University, did CIA research until two years ago. He studied the political stability of the Philippines under a contract with a major consulting firm.

"There are people who think no American scholar should work for the CIA, openly or in any other way," said Green, a member of the Philippines Studies Association.

"But my sense is that if academics can't contribute their knowledge to the government, where the heck is their government going to get the information to make better, or hopefully better, policy decisions?"

Green, who said he has done no CIA research for more than two years, worked for several years as a consultant for the New York consulting firm of Booz, Allen & Hamilton Inc., in which he said had a CIA contract to study the political situation in the Philippines.

"I didn't receive any money directly from the CIA," he said in a telephone interview. "I got paid as a consultant by the consulting firm, and I was smart enough to to speak to both my dean and the university's academic vice president, so they knew what I was doing."

Green's CIA-funded work, Villanova officials said, fit within the university's research guidelines, and thus he encountered no official problems.

Two political scientists at Rutgers University in New Brunswick ran afoul of school policy when they worked on a project in 1983 and failed to tell the university or their students that the course work might be used in a CIA-financed study of the United States.

The university found that the professors, Richard Mansbach, chairman of the political science department, and an associate, Harvey Waterman, "acted inappropriately," according to a university statement of Nov. 27, 1984. Rutgers officials said the contract — to study U.S. foreign policy in relation to Western Europe — was for about \$25,000 a year for several years.

"Mansbach and, indirectly, Waterman, should have been more concerned with the potential that existed for inappropriately using classroom students in connection with a research project," said Tilden Edelstein, dean of the Rutgers' Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

Mansbach, in a recent telephone interview, said the project had been completed and that he was not now involved in any further CIA research.

"I think that if CIA research on campus is open and unclassified, it can be a good thing because it opens up the agency to a diversity of points of views and perspectives that they might otherwise not have."

"And for an academic person doing research, it opens up the possibility of having a voice or an input into decisions. Open, unclassified CIA research on campus can provide a heck of a lot of insight perhaps not available in Washington," he said.

Mansbach also said that he at least suggested to his students at the beginning of the class that he was doing research for a government agency on a topic related to the course subject.

"Early in the semester I stated that the research project is funded by an agency of the U.S. government — a major intelligence agency with three letters in its name," he said.

The only university in Pennsylvania or New Jersey known to be performing CIA research now is Penn State in State College.

Charles Hosler, the university's vice president for research, said the university has a small CIA contract for "work in an area of business and economic analysis, but I am not at liberty to talk about it. It's not classified at all, but at the same time I have a verbal agreement not to discuss it."

"It's not a large amount, about \$30,000 a year, and all I can say is that it's for economic analysis."

Hosler, when asked if the Harvard controversy were the reason he could not discuss the project, answered, "Yes."

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